Response to Appeal Brief

This office action is in response to the Appeal Brief filed on Aug. 18, 2009 and the amendments filed on Aug. 18, 2009.

Claims 51–53, 55-78 and 85-97, are pending for examination. Claims 1-50, 54, 79-84 have been canceled.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with the attorney on record (Ellen M. Bierman) on October 22, 2009.

AMENDMENT:

To the amendments received on Aug. 18, 2007 please modify the following:

60. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for analyzing data produced for legal purposes, the method comprising:

receiving, from an information system that is external to the computer system for analyzing data produced for legal purposes, a plurality of electronic files that are stored in a hierarchical directory data structure ~~arranged according to a directory structure~~, that are subject to a legal proceeding, and that are produced by at least one party involved in the legal proceeding, said received plurality of electronic files having electronic characteristics that include metadata;

recursively extracting the plurality of electronic files from a plurality of paths of said hierarchical directory data structure ~~of the data structure~~ that is received from the external information system using a plurality of recursive engines, each of the plurality of recursive engines configured to extract a different file type and to cooperate with other of the plurality of recursive engines to extract other types of files;

storing the recursively extracted electronic files in a searchable text format in a first server unit, including storing textual content of the recursively extracted electronic files in the searchable text format in the first server unit;

obtaining the metadata from each of the recursively extracted electronic files, and storing the metadata in a second server unit, said storing including storing information of said hierarchical directory data structure so as to maintain said hierarchical directory;

converting the recursively extracted electronic files to a read-only format, and storing the electronic files in the read-only format in a third server unit;

receiving a request for electronic files having a specified text or metadata characteristic; and

processing the stored metadata to determine a set of electronic files having the specified text or metadata characteristic, thereby facilitating processing of the determined set of electronic files for legal purposes.

69. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for facilitating the analysis of data produced for legal purposes, the method comprising:

receiving, from an information system that is external to the computer system for analyzing data produced for legal purposes, a plurality of electronic files that are subject to a legal proceeding, that are produced for purposes of the legal proceeding by at least one party involved in the legal proceeding, and that are stored prior to being received by the computer system in a hierarchical directory data structure associated with the external information system, said received plurality of electronic files having electronic characteristics that include metadata;

recursively extracting from a plurality of paths of ~~a~~ said hierarchical directory ~~structure of the data~~ structure the plurality of electronic files received from the external information system using a plurality of recursive engines, each of the plurality of recursive engines configured to extract a different file type and to cooperate with other of the plurality of recursive engines to extract other types of files;

converting each of the recursively extracted electronic files to a searchable text format, and storing in a first server unit content of the converted files in the searchable text format;

obtaining and storing in a second server unit said metadata from each of the recursively extracted electronic files;

converting each of the recursively extracted electronic files to a format displayable on a display screen, and storing the converted files in the displayable format in a third server unit; and

responding to a request for at least one file having specified metadata or text characteristics using respectively at least one of the stored metadata or the stored content.

75. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for a computer system, the article of manufacture comprising:

a computer-readable medium having instructions stored thereon that are executable by a computer processor to analyze data produced for legal purposes, by:

loading, from an information system external to the computer system having the machine-readable medium, a plurality of electronic files that are subject to a legal proceeding, that are produced by at least one party involved in the legal proceeding, and that are stored in a hierarchical directory data structure associated with the external information system prior to being loaded at the computer system, said loaded plurality of electronic files having electronic characteristics that include metadata;

recursively extracting the plurality of electronic files from a plurality of paths of ~~a~~ the loaded hierarchical directory data structure ~~of the loaded data structure~~ using a plurality of recursive engines, each of the plurality of recursive engines configured to extract a different file type and to cooperate with other of the plurality of recursive engines to extract other types of files;

converting and storing in a first server unit content of the recursively extracted electronic files to provide a searchable text format;

obtaining and storing in a second server unit said metadata from each of the recursively extracted electronic files;

converting the recursively extracted electronic files to a format displayable on a display screen, and storing the converted files in the displayable format in a third server unit.

85. (Currently Amended) A computer system for analyzing data produced for legal purposes, the computer system comprising:

at least one recursive engine receiving, from an information system that is external to the computer system for analyzing data produced for legal purposes, a plurality of electronic files that are subject to a legal proceeding, the electronic files produced by and belonging to at least one party involved in the legal proceeding and stored in a storage medium,

said received plurality of electronic files having electronic characteristics that include metadata, and said at least one recursive engine recursively extracting the plurality of electronic files from each of a plurality of paths of a hierarchical directory structure in the storage medium, the at least one recursive engine configured to extract files of one type and to cooperate with other recursive engines to extract files of other file types;

a conversion engine converting the recursively extracted electronic files to a searchable text format, and obtaining metadata associated with the received electronic files;

a first server unit coupled to the conversion engine storing the converted electronic files in the searchable text format;

a second server unit coupled to the conversion engine storing the obtained metadata associated with the received electronic files; and

another engine in communication with the first and second server units receiving a request for electronic files having a specified metadata characteristic and processing the stored metadata to determine a set of electronic files having the specified metadata characteristic.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 51–53, 55-78 and 85-97, are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 60, 69, 75 and 85, are allowable because the prior art on record or that encountered in searching for the invention, fails to disclose or suggest the features of instant invention – "using a plurality of recursive engines to recursively extract electronic files, such at each of the recursive engines extracts just one file type and cooperate with other recursive engines to extract files of other file types" in a combination with all the limitations as claimed by applicant.

Claims 51-53, 55-59, 61-68, 70-74, 76-78 and 86-97, depend on claims 60, 69, 75 and 85 respectively, hence are allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan Y. Chen whose telephone number is 571-272-4016. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 7:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mofiz Apu can be reached on 571-272-4080. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Susan Y Chen/
Partial Sig. Examiner
Art Unit 2161

Oct. 23, 2009

/Apu M Mofiz/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2161